REMARKS

There were 18 claims in the original application numbered 1 – 18. With this Office Action Response there are 16 claims numbered 1 – 11, 14 – 16, and 19 - 20. Claims 3 – 8, 11, and 16 (original); claims 1, 2, 9, 10, 14, 15, 20 (previously presented); claim 19 (currently amended); and claims 12, 13, 17, and 18 (cancelled).

Reconsideration and allowance of the claims argued herein is respectfully requested.

Overview

The cited art appears to teach a performance-based supply chain management system that analyzes activity between trading partners. The analysis may be used to produce a KPI that can be used to determine what the character of the relationship is between trading partners, i.e. if trading partners work well together or if they have business friction. The KPI can be used by trading partners to judge whether they wish to do business based on another trading partner's KPI.

Conversely, Applicant's invention provides a method for distributing and safeguarding the consistency of information in a supply chain management system. This is accomplished by a set of regional authorities that determine who will be allowed to access and change the information residing on a set of hubs.

Applicant believes that paragraphs 0010 – 0017 essentially define the scope of Eicher by stating its objectives. Further, Applicant believes that the above summary of Eicher is accurate and essentially only related to Applicant's invention because they both concern the broad field of supply chain management.

The § 102 Rejections

At page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1 – 11, 13 – 16, 19 - 20 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Eicher (US 2002/0099598).

Claims 1 – 11, 13 – 16, and 19 – 20

The Examiner does not specifically identify within her arguments in the Office Action the claims at which those arguments are directed, although she does repeat a fragment of the claim. Applicant finds that the Examiner has cited the following text paragraphs and figure of Eicher as the basis for her rejection in every instance (paragraphs 186, 60 – 65, 104 – 106, and figure 2). To assist the Examiner and provide a successful traverse of the Examiner's rejections, Applicant has argued specifically against the Examiner-cited paragraphs as if applied against all the claims in the order in which the claims are presented.

Claims 1 - 8

Paragraph 186 appears to discuss the risk management components of Eicher. It appears that data are processed through an interference engine with results going to an active risk management portion which provides notification to various output devices. Paragraph 186 of

Eicher is not seen to teach or disclose a set of regional authorities for controlling access to a set of information or a computer program coupled to hubs that distinguish between simple and complex tasks, thus Eicher does not teach the invention.

Paragraphs 60 – 65 appear to discuss the "set-up phase" of Eicher. At Paragraph 65 Eicher states "Content may be provided to users based on their subscription level and authorization." This statement of paragraph 65 is the only language in these paragraphs that with a broad and liberal interpretation appears to hold any similarity to an element of Applicant's invention, but it does not teach or disclose a regional authority controlling access to a set of information. It does not teach or disclose servers dedicated to performing complex tasks and servers dedicated to performing simple tasks and a computer program coupled to each hub that distinguishes between simple and complex tasks. Thus, Eicher does not teach the invention.

Paragraphs 104 – 106 appear to discuss that Eicher can include a multi-computing environment stating that a plurality of actual server systems can operate in parallel to handle workload. Once again, Applicant can find no teaching or disclosure in these paragraphs that bear direct relevance to claim 1. These paragraphs do not teach or disclose a regional authority controlling access to a set of information. They do not teach or disclose servers dedicated to performing complex tasks and servers dedicated to performing simple tasks and a computer program coupled to each hub that distinguishes between simple and complex tasks. Thus, Eicher does not teach the invention.

Figure 2 of Eicher shows what could be a typical arrangement of trading partners, servers, and software agents in a networked configuration. Figure 2 and the other cited references within Eicher in any combination do not appear to teach or disclose a regional authority controlling access to a set of information. They do not teach or disclose servers dedicated to performing complex tasks and servers dedicated to performing simple tasks and a computer program coupled to each hub that distinguishes between simple and complex tasks. Thus, Eicher does not teach the invention.

For at least the reasons cited in the arguments above, it is believed that claim 1 is allowable over Eicher. Claims 2 - 8 depend either directly or indirectly from claim 1. For at least this reason and the reasons cited above it is believed that claims 2 – 8 are allowable over Eicher.

Claims 9 - 11

Paragraph 186 appears to discuss the risk management components of Eicher. It appears that data are processed through an interference engine with results going to an active risk management portion which provides notification to various output devices. Paragraph 186 of Eicher is not seen to teach or disclose sending a message to a heavyweight server prior to sending it to a user when a message requires processing and to a lightweight server when a message does not require processing, thus Eicher does not teach the invention.

Paragraphs 60 – 65 appear to discuss the "set-up phase" of Eicher. Eicher is not seen to teach or disclose sending a message to a heavyweight server prior to sending it to a user

when a message requires processing and to a lightweight server when a message does not require processing, thus Eicher does not teach the invention.

Paragraphs 104 – 106 appear to discuss that Eicher can include a multi-computing environment stating that a plurality of actual server systems can operate in parallel to handle workload. Even though Eicher may be configured to use parallel computing, Applicant can find no teaching or disclosure in these paragraphs that Eicher separates messages requiring processing from those that do not and in doing so sends a message to a heavyweight server prior to sending it to a user when the message requires processing and to a lightweight server when the message does not require processing, thus Eicher does not teach the invention.

Figure 2 of Eicher shows what could be a typical arrangement of trading partners, servers, and software agents in a networked configuration. Figure 2 and the other cited references in any combination do not teach or disclose separating messages requiring processing from those that do not and in doing so sending a message to a heavyweight server prior to sending it to a user when the message requires processing and to a lightweight server when the message does not require processing, thus Eicher does not teach the invention.

For at least the reasons cited in the arguments above, it is believed that claim 9 is allowable over Eicher. Claims 10 and 11 depend directly from claim 9. For at least this reason and the reasons cited above it is believed that claims 10 and 11 are allowable over Eicher.

Claims 14 – 16

Claim 14 is essentially claim 9 in an alternative claim form and for this reason and the arguments cited incident to claim 9 is also believed to be allowable over Eicher. Claims 15 and 16 depend from claim 14 and for this reason and the reasons cited incident to claim 14 are also believed to be allowable over Eicher.

Claim 19 and 20

Claim 19 states in part "a set of regional authorities controlling access to a set of information divided into a set of subsets of information as determined by said regional authorities, whereby each of said subsets of information is stored in a database coupled to each said hub..." Applicant has previously discussed that the "set of regional authorities..." element that appears in claim 1 is not present in the Examiner-cited art. This element appears in claim 19, but Applicant cannot find this claim element in any combination of the Examiner-cited paragraghs of Eicher (i.e. 186, 60 – 65, 104 – 106, and figure 2), thus Eicher does not teach the invention.

Claim 20 includes a similar claim element, i.e. "a set of regional authorities for controlling access to a set of information, said set of regional authorities dividing access control of said set of information among said set of designated regional authorities..." Applicant has previously discussed a similar claim element that appears in claim 1. Once again, Applicant cannot find this claim element in any combination of the Examiner-cited paragraphs of Eicher (i.e. 186, 60 – 65, 104 – 106, and figure 2), thus Eicher does not teach the invention

Request for Allowance

It is believed that this application is in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of this application.

If, in the opinion of the Examiner, an interview would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number shown below.

Respectfully submitted,

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